



CONTACT: Nikki Boone (302) 672-6857

For Immediate Release

NEWS RELEASE

Governor Minner Recognizes Excellence in Tourism

More than 175 people attend 2007 Governor's Tourism Summit held in Dover

Dover (May 31, 2007) – Governor Ruth Ann Minner recognized 11 representatives of Delaware's tourism industry today during the 2007 Governor's Tourism Summit, held in Dover, Del. at the Sheraton Dover Hotel. Hosted by the Delaware Tourism Office, more than 175 people attended the summit, entitled "Tourism Business Development: Sailing to Success."

The awards recognized individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to Delaware's tourism industry. In fiscal year 2006, tourism contributed more than \$858 million to Delaware's Gross Domestic Product. The state tourism industry employs more than 40,800 people and generates more than \$780 million in salaries and wages for Delaware residents annually.

"These awards are one way for the State to say thank you to the tourism industry for the innovative ideas and hard work that have made tourism such a vital part of our state's economy," said Governor Ruth Ann Minner. "Tourism helps create a high quality of life that not only makes Delaware a great place to live but also serves as a key amenity in attracting new business to the state."

Award winners were selected by a panel of judges, representing tourism organizations nationwide: Julie Donovan, Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance; Kathryn Farrington, Newport County Convention & Visitors Bureau in Rhode Island; Richard Gilbert, Maryland Office of Tourism Development; and, Bruce Poster, Southwest Planning and Marketing in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Delaware Economic Development Office Director Judy McKinney-Cherry and Director of Tourism Tim Morgan assisted the Governor in presenting the awards. This year's recipients are:

1. Roy Klein Hall of Fame: Individual Achievement **David P. Buckson**, Founder of Dover Downs
2. Hall of Fame: Annual Event NASCAR at the Monster Mile, **Dover International Speedway**
3. Travel and Tourism Person of the Year **Peggy Raley**, Nassau Valley Vineyards

4. Volunteer of the Year **Madeleine Hahn**, Winterthur Museum & Country Estate

Seven additional awards recognize organizations whose efforts address one of the specific goals of “attract,” “develop,” or “promote” from the Delaware Tourism Industry Strategic Plan. These awards are:

5. Best Itinerary **The Delaware 375th Commission from Lewes**
6. Best Time-Targeted Campaign Andrew Wyeth Exhibits, **Greater Wilmington Convention & Visitors Bureau**
7. Best Targeted Demographic Campaign Delaware Beach Weddings, **Nancy Stenger Joseph**
8. Best Partnership **Destination Newark Hotel Partnership**
9. Most Improved Tourism Product iPod Tour of the Winterthur Galleries, **Winterthur Museum and Country Estate**
10. Tourism Awareness Award Delaware Tourism Alliance, **Linda Parkowski**
11. Tourism Advocate Award **Gary B. Patterson**, Chair of the Governor’s Historical Park Task Force

Rather than a standard award trophy, the award-winners were presented with hand-crafted pottery, designed by two local artisans. Paul and Tonya Romanick of Romanick Pottery in Newark, Del. are members of Delaware By Hand, an organization that promotes Delaware’s resident-based crafts industry. For more information, visit www.delawarebyhand.org.

More information about the 2007 Governor’s Tourism Summit is available at www.visitdelaware.com/summit_registration.htm. This press release will also be posted to the DEDO Newsroom at <http://dedo.delaware.gov/news.shtml>.

About Delaware Tourism Office

The Delaware Tourism Office, 99 Kings Highway in Dover, Del., a division of the Delaware Economic Development Office, promotes tourism and economic growth in Delaware. For more information, visit the official Delaware Tourism Web site at www.visitdelaware.com or call toll-free (866) 284-7483.

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